

Fredericksburg Arts Commission Meeting

**Thursday, May 7th, 2009
City Hall Conference Room**

Attendees: Roy Jarnecke, George Solley, Julie Perry, Kerry Devine, Florence Ridderhof, Kathleen Walsh, Peter Scelfo, Kevin Bartram.

Approval of Minutes

Roy Jarnecke called the meeting to order. Approval of the minutes from the March 5th meeting was deferred to the June 4th meeting.

Roy Jarnecke shared a portion of an inspiring college lecture on the importance of the Arts to living.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Committee Reports

Website and Cultural Survey Committee Report- Carolyn Van Der Jagt

Carolyn Van Der Jagt made a presentation on the results of the cultural survey to date. She passed out handouts with an executive summary and a consolidated list of comments from the over 100 community members who have filled out the survey so far. Much discussion followed as to ways to encourage more people to fill out the survey. Kevin Bartram suggested a reminder email be sent to our original mailing list and that the commission members each ask 5 friends to complete the survey. Kerry Devine commented that from her perspective the limited results of the survey to date do confirm our impressions of how the community feels and met the commission's goal for the project. Carolyn Van Der Jagt responded that in particular she felt the student artists from UMW and local high schools were underrepresented. Roy Jarnecke reminded the group of the importance of personal contact to increase word of mouth and asked that individuals continue to impress upon friends and colleagues to contribute their thoughts. Carolyn Van Der Jagt did ask Julie Perry to follow-up with the City's Information Technology team about increasing the presence of the survey on the City's website and Kerry Devine suggested contacting Pete Forrester with Cox Communication about a PSA on the City's Public Access Channel.

Carolyn Van Der Jagt then gave a brief demonstration of the Directory module and the work on compiling the survey's information to date. She informed the commission that the Website and Cultural Survey Committee planned to meet in order to finalize wording and structure for the Directory and hoped to have it ready to go 'live' in July.

Arts Festival Committee – Kevin Bartram

Kevin Bartram presented for the Arts Festival Committee. He informed the commission that a proposal from the community had come before the Commission for supporting a new Arts Festival. Sue Henderson, a local event planner and artist, submitted an idea for a plein air festival in Fredericksburg for Fall of 2009 or Spring of 2010. The Arts Festival Committee met to consider this proposal and presented to the commission their counter proposal for a new Arts Festival in Fredericksburg. Kevin passed out a handout about the revised festival project and Julie Perry gave an introduction of Sue Henderson - the proposed project coordinator. Much discussion followed on the concept of the event, the timing of the event, the scope and planning of the event, and the differences between the original proposal and the revised version.

Florence Ridderhoff said the original proposal was not written to focus on local artists and arts venues in Fredericksburg and she thought that was important for our first major event as the Fredericksburg Arts Commission that we maintain a local focus. Kathleen Walsh shared her perspective as a visual artist that a plein air festival is usually a popular event with artists and sounded more interesting to her than the revised proposal submitted by committee. Kevin Bartram expressed concern over the geographic area covered in the original plein air festival proposal and felt a more central location would benefit the City, the Commission and the Community. Kerry Devine expressed concern over the timeline for planning the event for fall 2009. Julie Perry informed the group that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism had some professional services funds to put to this project if an agreement could be made between Sue Henderson, the Arts Commission, and Department Staff.

Kevin Bartram ended the discussion by saying the Arts Festival Committee would meet with Sue Henderson and other members who were not available for this original concept meeting and report back to the commission. George Solley informed the group that if an emergency meeting was necessary to approve and move forward with this proposal, in order to stay on the projected timeline, the Arts Festival Committee could call an additional meeting before the next scheduled one on June 4th.

Long Term Planning Committee – Peter Scelfo

Peter Scelfo presented an update from the Long Term Planning Committee. He read a paragraph from the executive summary of the document the committee is composing as an example of the depth and breadth of the committee's focus and what kind of a plan they intend to propose. Peter Scelfo then asked the Commission to give an extension to the committee allowing them to present the draft Strategic Plan in September rather than original spring date. He then asked Julie Perry to address the presentation of the document.

Julie Perry told the Commission that the Long Term Planning Committee was seeking approval from the Commission for a different style of meeting in order to

present the Strategic Plan more cohesively. She moved that the Fredericksburg Arts Commission authorize the Long Term Planning Committee to plan an expanded retreat-style meeting and fund that retreat and presentation with an up to \$1,000.00 expenditure. Her motion caused much discussion. Kerry Devine and George Solley explained that City organizations are often criticized for spending resources on the organization itself rather than on the task they with which they have been charged. They asked for clarification on the expenditure. Julie Perry, Peter Scelfo and Kathleen Walsh explained the motion was intended to cover the meeting itself and the presentation 'program', video and documents. Discussion followed over what the program would be and why this level of funding was needed. Kevin Bartram expressed concern over funding a polished presentation at the draft stage. He also informed the group of a strategic planning process that he had been involved in for Spotsylvania County Schools and suggested a more interactive approach between the Long Term Planning Committee and the entire Commission. Kerry Devine concurred. In the end, Julie Perry withdrew her motion to be re-evaluated in committee and the commission specifically asked the committee to delineate expenses for individual consideration before returning with a new motion.

Old Business

Arts District Conference – Roy Jarnecke

Roy Jarnecke reminded the group of the May 15th VALAA Conference in Fredericksburg. Registration ends on Friday, May 8th and application materials are on the Art's & Cultural Council of the Rappahannock's website.

Performing Arts Venue – Kerry Devine and George Solley

Kerry Devine and George Solley informed the commission of a meeting they attended between executives from the Silver Companies and City of Fredericksburg representatives. The meeting was regarding a proposal for development of the old Fredericksburg Hardware site into what is being called *Amelia Square*. As proposed, *Amelia Square* would include a 400 seat theater with some additional retail/restaurant/office space, as well as condominiums. The proposal before the City includes an approximately \$200,000.00 annual lease for the theater space and would then involve a 3-5 million dollar build-out of the leased space. It is projected that the build would be funded by the community and the non-profit arts sector as organized by Paul Lewis. Kerry Devine and George Solley said there was not much to report at this stage because they need more information on the proposed structure of the center's organization, the concept for the relationship between the city and the center, and the proposal for local organizations to have a stake in, or access to the center. Peter Scelfo spoke about the debate of inclusionary versus exclusionary and the importance of the Fredericksburg Arts Commission addressing these concepts and deciding how it wants to function in the artistic community at large. He used the example that he knew of 7 different groups working on different Arts Center proposals in the region. Kerry Devine said she too was aware of other

conversations but that this was the only official proposal before the City for consideration. Kevin Bartram and Roy Jarnecke asked a few questions about the inclusion of gallery space and the flexibility of the developer to amend the project at the request of the community or the commission. They were informed that there is retail space that could be bought by a gallery but not public gallery space included in the current plan. Otherwise, it was unclear as to how flexible, if any, are the components of this plan. Kerry Devine and George Solley will report more as this project evolves.

New Business

Sidney King Art Display – Roy Jarnecke

Roy Jarnecke reported that he had a recent conversation with Bob Antozzie from the City's Parks and Recreation Department about a Sidney King art piece that needs restoration. The piece is 30-35 years old and currently resides in Council Chambers. Kerry Devine and George Solley were unaware that the piece was to be removed. They suggested Julie Perry contact the Fredericksburg Area Museum for restoration efforts or information.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4th at 7pm in the City Hall Conference Room.

Adjournment

Kevin Bartram made a motion that the meeting be adjourned and Kerry Devine seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.